

What signs are used in school zones?



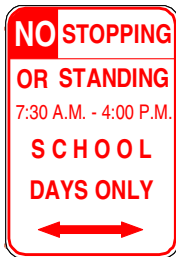
The **School Advance sign** is used several hundred feet in advance of a school safety zone to warn the driver of the approaching zone.



The **School Crossing sign** is placed next to or as close as possible to an established crosswalk. This sign is used in advance of every school crossing.



The **School Bus Stop Ahead sign** is used in advance of a location where school buses stop, load or unload students. It is only used when the bus stop is not visible from a distance of 500 feet.



The **No Stopping or Standing sign** is used to restrict parking during school hours. The parking restriction provides for safe visibility of school children in the sidewalk area to all drivers on the public street.



The **No U-Turn sign** is posted to restrict vehicles from making u-turns.

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City of El Paso



**ENGINEERING
DEPARTMENT
TRAFFIC DIVISION**

Information Brochure

School Zones



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City of
El Paso
Texas

School Safety Zones

School safety zones are very important to the City of El Paso. Every effort is made to make sure school zones are correctly designed and operated. This brochure provides a brief summary on some of the standards and procedures pertaining to school safety zones.

What is a school safety zone?

A school safety zone is a section of roadway with a reduced speed limit that contains a school crossing. The school safety zone begins at the point where the reduced speed limit sign is located and continues to the spot where the "End School Zone" sign is located.

These zones are intended to help schoolchildren cross streets safely. They are not installed solely for controlling speed on any public roadway.

How is a school safety zone established?

A school safety zone is established through a combination of data collection, engineering studies and coordination with school officials. This process involves deciding where a school zone would be needed and most effective.

It is important to note that traffic control in school areas is a highly sensitive subject. Many parents and teachers express their concerns for the safety of their children and sometimes request more traffic control than is actually needed. However, analyses have shown that at many locations, school-crossing controls requested by parents, teachers and other citizens are unnecessary and costly and tend to lessen the respect for controls that are needed.

What types of school safety zones are there?

1. School Sallies

Safety Zone: These zones have portable signs, called sallies installed in the center of the roadway. These signs provide better visibility of the designated school zone limits.



2. Permanent School Safety Zones:

These zones have signs installed off to the side of the roadway. Reduced speed zone signs are installed with a supplemental time plate sign designating the times the school safety zones are in operation. This type of zone is only enforced on days school is in session.



3. School Safety

Flashers: These zones have electronic or mechanically operated signs equipped with flashing lights. The school safety zone is in operation only when the lights on the sign are flashing. These school flashers are usually only installed on roads with a regular posted speed limit of 35 mph or more. School Districts are responsible for payment of 60 % of the total equipment and installation cost of school flasher signals.



Where should pedestrians cross the street in a school safety zone?

Simply put, at the crosswalk is the only place that pedestrians are permitted to cross the street in a school zone. It is not only illegal to cross at any other location inside a school zone, but it is extremely dangerous because motorists have the right of way and only have to yield to pedestrians crossing at the designated crosswalks.

What are the laws pertaining to school safety zones?

All school safety zones must comply with the Texas Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. This manual guides the placement and use of all traffic signals, signs, and pavement markings on public streets and highways. It is very important that this single set of standards be applied to all school zones throughout the state so that drivers become familiar with the location, the signs, and the operation of a school zone.

Any modifications of a school safety zone by anyone other than the Traffic Division for the City of El Paso is strictly prohibited. All requests for any changes must be coordinated through the Traffic Division so a proper investigation can be conducted on the request. It is extremely unsafe to do otherwise and whoever is responsible for any unauthorized changes will be held liable if an accident were to occur as a result of these changes.

What is the speed limit in a school zone?

The speed limit in a school zone may vary depending on the regular posted speed limit of the street the school safety zone is on. The City only allows a 20 mph maximum reduction of the regular posted speed limit, but in no case can the speed limit be less than 15 mph. State roadways, however, are only allowed a 15 mph maximum reduction by state law. The fines for violating this speed can be as high as \$300.

Does El Paso install Children at Play signs?

While it may seem that these types of signs will help our children be safer, research indicates that these signs do not slow down motorists or reduce pedestrian accidents. Instead, these signs give parents and their children a dangerous false sense of security. Also, motorists should always be aware of children playing in all neighborhoods, and therefore these signs would have to be installed on every residential street. Because of these serious concerns, the City of El Paso does not recognize the Child at Play sign.

Procedures and guidelines in the installation of all school traffic control devices

1. School principals of each school are responsible for requesting any new and/or modification to existing school traffic control devices.
2. Requests should be submitted in writing to the City Engineer.
3. Upon the receipt of the written request, the City Engineer directs the Engineering Traffic Division to conduct a traffic investigation study to determine the justification for the requested school traffic control devices.
4. The school principal is then notified of the results of the traffic engineering investigation, and the appropriate steps are taken.